



ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥



SPRITUALISM AND RELIGION

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ਪਹਿਲਾ ਸਥਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਲੇਖ

Amrit Kaur Raina

2007-08

ਲੜੀ ਨੰ. 532

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ਭੇਟਾ : 15/-ਰੁ:

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SPIRITUALISM AND RELIGION

Man is inquisitive by nature. Since he opened his eyes on this earth, he was wonder struck by the vast phenomenon and grandeur of nature lying around him. From his very inception, he has tried to delve deep into the mysteries and basic fundamental questions of life and tried to find their answer. Who is the creator of this world? Who am I? Where do we come from and why? Is there some higher power which guides our destinies? What is the relation of man with his Creator? What is that power which separates man from God and ties him down with earthly ties and casts an illusion on him? What is the goal of our life and how can life and how can we achieve that? What happens to us when we die? Is there life after death? Do we reap the fruit of our actions? Relations of man with man, society, with his own self, are some of the basic questions which have always been the subject of research. If man is light illumined, then how can he empower himself spiritually, develop his latent divine potentialities and achieve permanent peace and bliss in life. Religion and spiritualism try to answer these questions.

Now, the question arises what is religion, what is spiritualism, what is their relationship and what is the role they play in moulding the personality of man?

Religion defies easy definition. Thoughts considered to be supernatural, sacred divine, rituals, associated with such beliefs or system of thought come into the domain of religion. According to Sanskrit word Dharma what ever is useful and beneficial for life is

Dharma (धीयते इति धर्म) Dharma is a way of life, path of life which helps a man to develop spiritualism in life and become a higher developed person. In Rigveda (11/9/17) the word Dharma means benevolent output derived from yajnas. In chandogya upnishada (2/2/3/1) the word Dharma has been used for duty. In Gita (1/1) also it has been used in this sense (धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे). In Gita higher values of life like fearlessness, purity of heart, alms giving, religious rites, right study of scriptures, self-discipline, truth, compassion toward all beings and such other eternal values of life constitute Dharma (Gita Chap XVI).

According to Vashashik Sutra what is beneficial for material and spiritual development is Dharma. (यतो अभस् उदय निः श्रेयस सिद्धी सः धर्मः) In Buddhism moral virtue (sila) concentration (Samadhi) and wisdom (prajna), these three combined with vimukti (Nirvana) constitute Dharma (Digha Nikaya vol. 2 p-25). In Sikhism, the three main cardinal principles of Dharma are to earn one's livelihood with the sweat of one's brow, to share it with the needy for social reconstruction and name meditation to develop spiritual values in life which can be well expressed in the words of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

*"You live your life making earnest efforts,
And make your life happy through rightful earnings.
Meet the Lord through contemplation,
And your anxieties will be dispelled.*

(M.V.A. G.P. 522)

ਉਦਮੁ ਕਰੇਦਿਆ ਜੀਉ ਤੂੰ ਕਮਾਵਦਿਆ ਸੁਖ ਭੁੰਚੁ ॥

ਧਿਆਇਦਿਆ ਤੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮਿਲੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਉਤਰੀ ਚਿੰਤ ॥

(ਮ. 5-ਪੰ. 522)

The English word religion has been derived from the Latin words religo, or relego or religare. Religo means revernee for gods. Relego means Re-again + lego- reading which stands for repetition or reading again and again of religious scriptures. Re-again + Ligare – to connect, meaning thereby reconnecting ourself to the divine. This interpretation is favoured by the modern scholars. Religion is related with supernatural and encodes instructions or habits useful for survival (Encyclopedia of Religion. Page 2-13)

Religions are numerous like Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity. They may have different view points regarding religious questions. But the ultimate goal of all these religions is the same that is spiritual development of man, self-realization and union with God. This is the common thread, the binding force in all religions, this is spiritualism. Spiritualism is a much wider term. It encompasses the entire vista of man's life i.e. physical, mental, spiritual, emotional and social. Religion also does the same. All the religious sages, Lord Krishna, Lord Budha, Guru Nanak, Kabir, Christ, Muhammed, Preached the same higher moral values of life, universal love, brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. "The temple and the mosque are the same. The Hindus worship and the Muslim prayer are the same. Allah and Abhekh are the same. The Puranas and the Quran are the same. Recognise all mankind as one as it is the same God who creates all" (Dasam Granth P. 19). This

is spiritualism. Spiritualism crosses the barriers of caste creed and religions and takes the entire mankind in one fold. As a man may be a Hindu or Sikh, or Musalman or Christen according to his religion but a man is a man. All the people are children of God according to spiritualism. God is one but sages call it by different names. एक सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति (Rigveda-1/164/20). Religions are many but spiritualism is one single entity at the base of all the religions. Out of spirituality religions are born. Out of the revealed sacred writings of the sages scriptures are unfurled. The sacred writings of spiritually evolved souls incorporated in sacred scriptures like Gita, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Bible, Quran, become the basis of different religions. And when the followers of these religions try to implement the higher values of these sacred scriptures in life, they develop spiritualism in life. Thus spiritualism and religion are inter-related and inter dependent, each giving birth to the other. But one can be a great spiritual soul without practising any set religion. Religions are organized whole spirituality is not. Lord Budha did not believe in God or permanent soul. But he is considered an enlightened awakened spiritual personality of the world. The moral values of universal love, compassion, non-violence make him a great spiritual leader. The story of Abu Ben Adam again clarifies the difference between religion and spiritualism. He loved man. But he topped the list of those who loved God. Love of man is love of God." One who loves man finds God, says Guru Gobind Singh in Dasam Granth (P. 14). Love thy neighbour as thyself says Christ. This common

thread of universal love found in all the religions is spiritualism. There may be wars, strifes, invasions in the name of religion. But when one rises on the higher plane of spiritualism, all hatred, ill will, violence ceases and the factor of love dominates which can be well expressed in the words of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

*"I have forgotten to speak ill or think ill of any one,
Ever since I learnt to live in the company of good and holy
saints, No one is my enemy nor any one stranger to me,
I get on well with one and all (M V. A.G.P. 1299)*

ਬਿਸਰਿ ਗਈ ਸਭ ਤਾਤਿ ਪਰਾਈ ॥

ਜਬ ਤੇ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਮੋਹਿ ਪਾਈ ॥

ਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ ॥

(M. 5 ਪੰ. 1299)

Now let us see what is the role of spiritualism and religion in shaping the destiny of man and moulding his personality. Man cannot live by bread alone. He needs spiritual food for his sustenance. From times immemorial India has been a land of spiritual consciousness. Spiritual books like 'Vedas, Upnishadas, Ramayana, Gita, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the revealed books of God have been giving spiritual food to one and all. Indian sages saints and educationists consider self-realization and self manifestation as the ultimate goal of life. Hence these religious spiritual books have been a source of life and light to millions of people. P. 13).

Spiritualism and religion are wide terms which encompass the entire vista of man's life i.e. physical mental, spiritual,

emotional and social. Spiritual religious books tell us that man is endowed with great inborn potentialities and capacities and if they are developed and blossomed fully, he can scale the heights higher and higher. Swami Vivekanand believes that all the souls are potentially divine and education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.¹

The body is the temple of God in which are revealed precious pearls of knowledge (M.3-P-1346.) and if these precious pearls of knowledge are explored and developed with the help of a true Guru, the harmonious development of personality takes place. Man is carved in the image of God. *The drop is contained in the ocean, the ocean in the drop.* (M.I.P.1318.) The human body is not a mere body. In the body, there is divine light which has been placed there by great God. *"Oh! My body the lord imbued thee with light and then thou comest into this world.* (M.3-P-91.). That is why Guru Amar Das asks man to recognize his essence i.e. know thyself in the modern words.

"You are the embodiment of light oh! Man

Recognise thy essence.

(M-3-P-.441.)

ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥

(H. 3-ੲ. 441)

Within the mind are the jewels and the rubies, whose worth is infinite (M-3-P-754). Man has got a storehouse of energy. He has great potentialities to solve his own problems. He can carve out his destiny through his own efforts. If guided and inspired properly

he can work wonders that is why lord Budha asks man to become his own lamp of knowledge to guide his own path (आपु दीपो भव).

On the basis of his actions and qualities, the Gurus have divided man into two categories, 'Gurmukh' and 'Manmukh.' The Gurmukh or Brahmagyani (A man having divine knowledge and experience) or Khalsa (the pure) is the ideal man of the Gurus whom they tried to carve in their own image through moral, spiritual training. If a man controls his evil impulses, his haumai (ego) and attunes himself to God he becomes a 'Gurmukh' a God-dedicated soul. But if he forgets God and does not control his evil impulses he degenerates and becomes a 'Manmukh' self-willed egoist away from God. The Manmukh is attached to worldly wealth, worldly allurements and sensual enjoyments. He is bound by the whirlpool of desires. Getting and spending he lays waste his powers. He is enveloped by the darkeners of ignorance. He is tossed in bondage from birth to birth.

He writhes in pain day and night

And the noose of death is round his neck.

He gets no peace even in his dreams,

And anxiety tears at his heart. (M-3-P. 30)

ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਦੁਖ ਕਮਾਵਦੇ ਨਿਤ ਜੋਹੇ ਜਮ ਜਾਲੇ॥

ਸੁਪਨੈ ਸੁਖ ਨ ਦੇਖਨੀ ਬਹੁ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਪਰਜਾਲੇ॥ (ਮ. 3-ਪੰ-30)

In Gurbani the example of Ravana is quoted to distinguish between 'Gurmukh' and 'Manmukh'. He was a great scholar and had mastered all the Shastras and Vedas and yet he could not control his lust for revenge and sex. Far away from real spiritualism, the animal in him took the better of him and led to his

destruction and degeneration. In Sukhmani Sahib, Guru Arjan Dev has described the character, personality and spiritual powers of Brahmgyani or Gurumukh in detail. His spiritual powers are developed. He is the purest of the pure rays serene. His mind is illumined and nourished by divine knowledge. Meditating over the name of God he enjoys supreme bliss. He is compassionate and works for the welfare of humanity at large. He lives like a lotus flower, fully blossomed, who scatters his fragrance around to beautify the world. There is peace and contentment in his life.

In Gita also lord Krishna depicts in detail two types of men, the one possessing divine nature, sattvic disposition and the other possessing a demonic disposition. The sattvic qualities are all divine attributes of God. They constitute man's spiritual wealth. They are described in detail in chapter sixteen verses one, two, three. They are fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness, charity right study of scriptures, self-discipline, truth, peace, compassion towards all beings forgiveness, cleanliness of body and purity of heart and mind. The development of these sattvic qualities lead a man to self-realization and self-manifestation. This is what Christ says in Bible, "Be ye, therefore perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Hypocrisy, arrogance, pride conceit, anger, ignorance of mind are the marks of a man with demonic disposition (Geeta XVI/IV). He is given to greed, lust and anger. He strives hard to amass wealth by unfair means and use it for sensuous pleasures. Lust, anger and greed constitute the threefold gate of hell leading

him to destruction. Due to his demonical nature he is cast again and again into demonical wombs by the lord.

Now the question arises how the powers of body, mind and soul can be developed through spiritualism to strengthen and empower oneself. In the beginning of Japji one important spiritual question is asked "How can one become sachara (true)" in the court of God and how the veil of ego can be torn as under? Prompt comes the reply, "Follow the Hukam, the ordinance and discipline of God and thou can achieve your goal."

The Gurus ask their disciples to discipline their physical, mental, moral and spiritual faculties. It is the training of the body, mind and soul to act according to rules and regulations. It means moderation, control, sublimation and balance in our thoughts, words, deeds and desires. Body is the gift of God and taking care of the body and keeping it in a healthy and sound condition by regular habits and good diet taken in moderation is the first Dharma of man. (शरीरं मनुजस्य रक्लुपं धर्मम्) Live for hundred years performing your duties well and taking good diet, say the Vedas. The constitution of a man's mind is determined by the kind of food he takes. Purity of mind fallows from purity of diet earned by rightful means. (आहारशुद्धि सत्त्वशुद्धि) (chandogya Upanishad VII-XXVI-2). In Gita lord Krishna insists on taking sattvic diet to develop a satvic mind. Physical chastity is emphasized. Smoking and use of intoxicants are prohibited in Gurbani.

*"Avoid such foods which cause pain to the
Body and arouse passion in the mind.*

*Avoid such dresses is which cause pain in body
And arouse passion in the mind. (M.I.P-16)*

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਖਆਰੁ ॥

ਜਿਤੁ ਖਾਧੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰੁ ॥

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਪੈਨਣੁ ਖੁਸੀ ਖਆਰੁ ॥

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(ਮ. 1-ਪੰ. 16)

For physical fitness life of action hard labour and service to humanity is emphasized. Perfection in action is the real yoga says lord Krishna in Gita (योगਾ ਕਰਮਸੁ ਕੌਸ਼ਲਸੁ) which depends on a strong and stout body. That is why Vivekanand prefers to build a strong body by playing football than to study Gita passively. His towering physical personality cast a spell on the western people. He conquered west through his spiritual power.

For the physical fitness of their disciples, the Gurus emphasized games, sports and training in arms. There was blend of Bhagti and Shakti in their educational curriculum. Guru Har Gobind was a saint soldier, whom Guru Arjan, the first martyr of the Sikh religion admonished to sit fully armed on the throne. Guru Gobind Singh turned the Sikhs into a martial community through games, sports and training in arms. He raised the dormant energies of the vanquished people and filled them with rare spirit of valour and confidence. "Men who had never touched a sword or shouldered a gun were empowered by him to become heroes and soldiers in the battle of life. Confectioners and washermen, sweeper and barbers became leaders of armies before whom the Rajas quailed and the Nawabs cowered down with terror."²

"The Sikhs whom you see around are men of sturdy built, handsome countenance, of tough strength and unflinching courage. They are Sishyas, disciples of Guru Nanak. It is through his teachings that their temper is fearless. They keep their heads erect. Their character and countenance are brightened with magnanimity". These physical qualities of the Sikhs based on spiritualism have empowered them to carve a nich for themselves in the whole world.

"He alone is learned and educated. Who gains self knowledge through self enlightenment." (M.I. P-25)

ਪ੍ਰਣਵਤਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕੈਸਾ ਹੋਇ॥

ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਬੁਝੈ ਸੋਇ॥

(H. 1-ਪੰ. 25)

Ignorance is a spiritual bondage. Gurus emphasize acquisition of knowledge for mental enlightenment. "of all elements, the most significant is the element of knowledge." (M.I.A.G. P-152) "Of all the yajnas, the most divine is the Gyan Yajna" says lord Krishna (न ही ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते (Geeta 4/38). It is Avidya (Ignorance) which forges fetters to bind the mind. It is divine wisdom which enlightens the mind. Gotma, became Budha (the enlightened one) by the acquisition of knowledge. Just as darkness disappears when the lamp is lighted, similarly through the study of books of wisdom, ignorance of mind is removed. It becomes clean and does not get dirty again.

"One can clean the mind with the jewel of wisdom

And there after it is soiled not again."

(M.I.A.G.P-992)

ਗਿਆਨ ਰਤਨਿ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਜੀਐ ਬਹੁਤਿ ਨ ਮੈਲਾ ਹੋਇ ॥

(M. 1-ਪ੍ਰ. 992)

Knowledge not only illumines the mind, it gives its seeker divine happiness. Guru Nanak has described in Japji, the domain of knowledge (Gyan Khand) which is illumined by the waves of knowledge. In this realm, there is abundance o knowledge, 'Gyan Prachand' where a seeker can enjoy millions of wonderful sights and sounds. It is full of divine music (Nada), joyous spirit (Vinod) and abounds with vibrations of happiness.

*In the domain of knowledge, knowledge abounds,
Myriad kinds of joys, sights and sounds.*

(M.I. Japji, P-7)

ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਚੰਡੁ ॥

ਤਿਥੈ ਨਾਦ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਕੋਡ ਅਨੰਦੁ ॥ (M. 1-ਪ੍ਰ. 7)

The message of Gita is a beautiful synthesis of action, knowledge and devotion. We need all the three to have a sound philosophy of life. Arjana could not fight unless Krishna unfolded to him the world of vision, the reality about life, nature, world and God. "Stand up, be strong, do not be weak (कलैष्यं मां स्म गमः परीथ) (Geeta 2/3). Do thy Dharma. Offer thy actions as a sacrifice to the living God". Krishna admonishes Arjana to rise above sentimentalism. Death is a change of garment. Yield not to unmanliness. Shake off this faint heartedness. Act as a brave soldier. Be a hero in the strife of life. "Act, act in the living present. Faith within and God overhead". Be guided by your inner light, your conscience. No body will help you. You, yourself are

your friend. You, yourself are your enemy. (आत्मैव हात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः)(Geeta VI/II).” Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached.” This is the greatest lesson we learn from Gita which helps in the spiritual development of man.

According to some people Kurukshetra war is an allegory. The body is the chariot. The senses are the horses. The mind, the reins. The intellect is the charioteer, the controlling power which holds the reins of the horse in hand and checks it to run ruthlessly. This same allegory is given in kathopanishad. By controlling the mind, we conquer the world, says Guru Nanak. This magic transformation of Arjana takes place through this lengthy spiritual discourse between him and lord Krishna which empowers him to shed off his weakness of mind and strengthen him to fight valiantly in the battle field of life. The vibrations of fear are reversed by this intellectual discourse. And when the fear of death is removed, it becomes easier to fight in war. That is why Guru Gobind Singh asks his disciples to remove the dirt of cowardice with the broom of knowledge. (Dasam Granth P-570) He declares emphatically, “Blest is his life in this world who repeats God’s name on his lips and contemplates war in his heart (Dasam Granth, P-570) He selected the five beloveds on the day of Baisakhi, removing cowardice with the broom of knowledge.

To awaken the martial spirit of the people he revived ancient Indian literature. The stories of Rama destroying the demon king of Lanka, the son of Devaki crushing Kansa and specially the exploits of that personification of righteousness and divine power called Durga, breaking the skulls and drinking the

blood of Mohikasur and other demons filled his heart with hope and confidence that he too would be able to harness the dormant energies of the vanquished people. The musical narration of these heroic stories filled the Sikhs' hearts for social freedom and national ascendancy. These divine songs and singing of heroic ballads in his court created such mighty soldiers like Baba Deep Singh, Taru Singh, Hari Singh Nalwa, Banda Bahadur who were cut to pieces limb by limb and his own sons who were bricked alive and died fighting but never surrendered and compromised with the unjust, cruel rulers and oppressors of their times. This spiritual power empowered Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Teg Bahadur, Mati Dass, Sati Dass, Bhai Dyala to sacrifice their lives calmly for the sake of justice with divine glow on their faces singing the divine name with their lips "oh! God thine sweet will be done." These heroic sacrifices of the Gurus have inspired many Bhagat Singh to die valiantly on the altar of motherland singing the songs of bravery "Oh! Mother dye my garments with the divine colours of spring."

Religion tells us that mere intellectual development without the development of character, learning without piety, proficiency in the sacred lore, with a deficiency in practice may pervert the very goal of spiritualism. Ethical conduct is the basis of spiritual life. Truth is high but higher still is truthful living. There can be no worship without good actions. The mark of an educated person is that he contemplates upon the higher values of life.

"He alone is a wise man,

Who gains spiritual knowledge,

Through meditation upon the divine virtues". (M.I. P.931)

ਗੁਣ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਗੁਣ ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥ (M. 1-ਪੰ. 931)

Divine knowledge can be obtained through the practical evolution of higher values alone. And these virtues like our friends help us to overcome vices.

"Nanak as many are the vices,

So many are the chains round our neck

Ye, one removes the vices with the cultivation of virtues in life. As virtues are our only friends".

(M.I. P.595)

ਨਾਨਕ ਅਉਗੁਣ ਜੇਤੜੇ ਤੇਤੇ ਗਲੀ ਜੰਜੀਰ ॥

ਜੇ ਗੁਣ ਹੋਨਿ ਤ ਕਟਿਅਨਿ ਸੇ ਭਾਈ ਸੇ ਵੀਰ ॥

(M. 1-ਪੰ. 595)

A person may read a large number of books and acquire degrees but he will not be considered an educated person if he suffers from selfishness, greed and ego.

"An educated person is a fool

If he indulges in ego, greed and lust."

(M.I. P.140)

ਪੜਿਆ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਸੁ ਲਬੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਅੰਹਕਾਰਾ ॥

(M. 1-ਪੰ. 140)

Man is bound by the law of Karma. The body is a field (इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते) (Gita -13/1). As we sow so shall we reap. A man sattvic in character possesses divine disposition (सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम्) (Gita 14/16)

The fruit of sattvic actions is harmony and purity. The fruit of rajasic action is pain. The fruit of tamasic actions is ignorance. Lust, wrath and avarice are the threefold ways to hell (Gita 16/2). Evil impulses are to be controlled and sublimated otherwise delusion and destruction will be the result.

"Attachment leads to desire.

Desire to anger, anger to delusion,

delusion to confused memory

and confused memory to destruction of reason."

(Gita 2/62-63)

The more we run after sensory pleasures, the less bright becomes the flame in our hearts. Control your senses and the flame will go stronger and stronger. When godly virtues dominate heart becomes pure and man hears the gentle voice of his conscience, the inner self and treads on the right path.

In his Japji Guru Nanak has described five stages of mental and spiritual journey of the individual. These stages mark the development of scientific outlook, artistic vision creative attitude, moral and spiritual strength which help to realize the divine truth. these five grades of spiritual journey are Dharam Khand (The realm of perceptual truth), Gyan Khand (The realm of knowledge), Saram Khand (The realm of action or divine grace), Sach Khand (The Realm of Divine Truth). The disciple has to pass through these realms to become fully accomplished. It is the path of knowledge, action and devotion, all the three combined together. This blend of Gyan (knowledge), Karam (action) and Bhakti

(devotion) lead to balanced spiritual development. Then the disciple reaches the ultimate, the abode of the Formless lord and is united with him. It is condition of peace, of consummate joy and perfect tranquility, a condition transcending all human telling. The ray is united with the sun. Water blends with water. Light blends with light. Perfection is achieved. There is complete identification of the self with the higher self.

For spiritual development self-purification by the development of virtues, love, devotion, concentration and meditation on God's name, singing of God's praises in sadh Sangat, service of mankind have been emphasized by our sages, saints and scriptures. The Sikh Gurus attach great importance to the role of the Guru in the spiritual development of a person. One cannot think of any spiritual, moral, mental or social development without the kindly help of the Guru. The ennobling touch of the enlightened divine personality transforms the life of the disciple. He is a light kindling other lights, an awakened soul awakening other souls. It is with the help of the true Guru that the mind of the disciple is cleansed and emancipated. The veil of ego is torn asunder and he sees God everywhere.

The egg of superstition hath burst,

The mind is illumined.

The Guru hath cut the fetters of the feet,

And freed the captive (M.I. P. 1002)

ਫੂਟੇ ਅੰਡਾ ਭਰਮ ਕਾ ਮਨਹਿ ਭਇਓ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ ।।

ਕਾਟੀ ਬੇਰੀ ਪਗਹ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਬੰਦਿ ਖਲਾਸੁ ।। (ਮ. 5-ਪੰਨਾ-1002)

Besides the human guru, the enlightened and the perfect teacher, the Sikh Gurus consider God, self, word, Guru Granth Sahib, Nature and Sangat as 'Guru'.

In Sidhghost, the yogis ask Guru Nanak, "who is your Guru, Whose disciple you are?" the Guru replies:

*"The word (shabad) is the Guru,
And the mind attuned to the shabad is the disciple
The Shabad is the Guru, teacher, fathomless and calm,
Without the shabad the people wander astray,
Attune your mind to the word, Guru."*

(M.L.P. 942)

ਭਵਜਲੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਲੰਘਾਵਣਗੁਰੁ ।।...

ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ।।...

ਨਾਨਕ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਪਾਲਾ ।।

(M.L.P. 943)

The idea of shabad as Guru is found in Vedas, upanishadas and Gita. Word (the living voice of God) imparts knowledge and truth to man. God is identified with the word. In Gita Lord Krishna describes in detail the repetition of the word 'Om' for name meditation. Gurus emphasize the reading and reciting of Gurbani and name meditation in the ambrosial hours of the morning. Name meditation is the panacea for all ills.

Musical singing of Gurbani gives emotional food. With emotionally balanced and stable mind one marches ahead on the path of life. Singing of God's name elevates his character and brings strength and solace to his mind in the sorrows and Struggles of day to day life. Why to worry. Guru is there to protect and help us.

This sense of indwelling presence of the Guru in Guru Granth Sahib has shaped the course of Sikh history and led to many noblest endeavours in the annals of mankind in the cause of humanity, dignity and freedom. The teachings of Guru Granth Sahib and other holy books have been a source of life and light to millions of people. To make Guru Granth Sahib as a vehicle of mass-education, the Gurus made Sangat and Pangat an integral part of the lives of their disciples. God dwells in the company of saints. (M.I.P. 72) *The society of the saints is the School where one is instructed in the merits of God (M.IV.A.G.P. 1316)*. One is purged of one's evil impulses in a saintly company. Sajjan Thug, Koda Rakash and Noorshah came into the company of Guru Nanak and were transformed. How sangat trains one in social and civic efficiency and in social behaviour is very beautifully described by the fifth Guru in Sukhmani Sahib.

By holy association, lamp of divine light is lit. One is blessed with wisdom. There is Kirtan, Katha, Discussions and discourses, where problems are solved and doubts removed. All the seekers after truth are united both in word, deed and thought for noble purposes of life. Sadh Sangat not only helps in spiritual progress but social development also. In Sadh Sangat and Pangat (community dining), there is no difference between man and man. The barriers of caste creed, high and low are removed. God is one and we all are his children. Recognise all mankind as one, says the Guru. Service of Sangat becomes service of God. The Gurus taught this service of man by their personal examples by sacrificing their

all for the welfare of society. They emphasize the sharing of one's earnings with the needy for the upliftment of society and reconstruction of a new social order.

*He alone, O Nanak, knows the right path of life
Who earns his livelihood with the sweat of his brow,
And shares it with his fellow human beings.*

(M.I.P. 1245)

ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ । ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ । ।

(M. - ਪੰਨਾ. 1245)

This is what lord Krishna says in Gita.

तै प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः (12, 2)

*Those who are devoted to the welfare of all attain me and
endear themselves to me.*

Strengthened by these spiritual virtues of body , mind and soul, man attains such spiritual heights that his own inner self, his conscience, Atma awakens, he recognizes himself and his own inner self becomes the Guru, the guiding star of his life. When man recognizes his higher self, the divinity in himself, he undergoes a wonderful change. This divine consciousness helps him to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, virtue and vice. His will power and character are developed. He develops strength to resist temptations. This divine consciousness gives him mental balance and keeps him on the right track. It prevents him from becoming acquisitive, over ambitious or greedy. It inspires him to be kind and helpful to the less fortunate ones. "When this

God-consciousness becomes a part of conscience, a monitor a deep and all pervasive sentiment in man's every day life, influencing and guiding his behaviour as a second nature man under goes wonderful change", says Guru Nanak. Empowered by this spiritual awakening his daily prayer becomes to die fighting valiantly and heroically in the battlefield of life discharging the Drama of his life.

*"Give me this power O Almighty,
From righteous deeds I may never refrain
Fearlessly may I fight all the battles of life.
With confident courage claiming the victory
May my highest ambition be to sing thy praises.
And may the glory be ingrained in my heart,
When this mortal life reaches its end,
May I die fighting with limitless courage...*

(Guru Gobind Singh, Dasam Granth, P-99)

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ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਸਬੰਧੀ

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਇਕ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੀ ਸਥਾਪਨਾ 1963 ਵਿੱਚ ਕੁੱਝ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧ ਸਿੱਖ ਹਸਤੀਆਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ, ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ, ਸਿੱਖ ਨੈਤਿਕਤਾ, ਸਿੱਖ ਸੱਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਾਰੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਨੇ ਹੁਣ ਤੱਕ 534 ਅਜਿਹੀਆਂ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਵਾਂ (Tracts) ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਪੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਪੱਸ਼ਟ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਜਾਗਰ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਉਪਰਾਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਕੇਵਲ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੀ, ਸਗੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ-ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਸੱਤ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ (Charitable Trusts) ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ।

(1) ਅਕਾਲੀ ਫੂਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ (2) ਡਾ. ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ (3) ਮਦਰ ਆਫ਼ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ (4) ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ (5) ਗਿਆਨੀ ਦਿੱਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ (6) ਭਗਤ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ (7) ਸ. ਨਰੈਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ

ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਰਣਨ ਕੰਮਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਸਕੂਲਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਲਜਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੜ੍ਹ ਰਹੇ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਇਮਤਿਹਾਨ ਆਖੋਜਿਤ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਇਮਤਿਹਾਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ-ਪੱਤਰ (Question Papers) ਸਿੱਖ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਰਚਿਤ ਬਾਣੀ, ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਆਦਿ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਮਤਿਹਾਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਸਥਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਨਾਮ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਅਜਿਹੀਆਂ ਕਾਰਜਸ਼ਾਲਾਵਾਂ (Workshops) ਦਾ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉੱਭਰ ਰਹੇ ਯੁਵਕ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਹਿਰਾਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਲੋੜੀਂਦੀ ਸਿਖਲਾਈ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਕਾਲਜਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੜ੍ਹ ਰਹੇ ਲਾਇਕ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਨੂੰ ਵਜ਼ੀਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਲੋੜੀਂਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੀ ਆਮਦਨ ਦੇ ਕੋਈ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਸਾਧਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਸੁਨੇਹੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੇ ਹਿਤੈਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਹੀ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਰੰਤਰ ਜਾਰੀ ਰੱਖ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਭਾਰਸ਼ਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਜੀਵਨ-ਪ੍ਰਯੰਤ ਚੰਦਾ ਹੀ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੀ ਆਮਦਨ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਸਾਧਨ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਕੁਝ ਸ਼ਰਧਾਲੂ ਗੁਰਸਿੱਖ ਵੀ ਸਮੇਂ-ਸਮੇਂ ਤੇ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੀ ਮਾਲੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪਰ ਇਸਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਮੈਂ ਇਹ ਲਿਖਣ ਲਈ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਰ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਬਹੁ-ਪੱਖੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਜਾਰੀ ਰੱਖਣ ਲਈ ਮਾਲੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਸਖ਼ਤ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ। ਪਿਛਲੇ ਕਈ ਸਾਲਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਖਰਚਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਵਾਧਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਕਾਰਨ ਟ੍ਰੈਕਟ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਲੋੜੀਂਦੇ ਕਾਗਜ਼, ਛਪਾਈ ਅਤੇ ਡਾਕ ਖਰਚ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਵਾਧਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਹੈ। ਡਾਕ ਦਾ ਖਰਚ ਇਤਨਾ ਵੱਧ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਟ੍ਰੈਕਟ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੇਵਲ ਇੱਕ ਰੁਪਏ ਵਿੱਚ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਹੁਣ ਉਸ ਟ੍ਰੈਕਟ ਨੂੰ ਭੇਜਣ ਲਈ ਲਗਭਗ 5 ਰੁਪਏ ਖਰਚੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਹਰ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਹਿੰਗਾਈ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਵੱਧਣ ਦੇ

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਅਧੀਨ ਚਲ ਰਹੇ ਟਰੱਸਟਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਜ-ਖੇਤਰ

1. ਅਕਾਲੀ ਭੂਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ

ਹਰ ਸਾਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਹਿਬਾਨ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਸਿੱਖ ਨੈਤਿਕਤਾ, ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਸਾਲ 100 ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਰਬੋਤਮ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਨੂੰ 6100/- ਰੁਪਏ ਦਾ ਇਨਾਮ ਦਿਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

2. ਡਾ. ਗੰਢਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ

ਵਾਰਸ਼ਕ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਯੋਗਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲੇ, ਦੂਜੇ ਤੇ ਤੀਜੇ ਸਥਾਨ ਉੱਪਰ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕ੍ਰਮਵਾਰ 2100/-, 1500/- ਤੋਂ 1000/- ਰੁਪਏ ਦੇ ਇਨਾਮ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

3. ਮਦਰ ਆਫ਼ ਮਾਲਸਾ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ

ਹਰ ਸਾਲ ਕਾਲਜ ਦੇ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਉੱਤੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਦਾ ਇਮਤਿਹਾਨ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਹਰ ਜੋਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਤਿੰਨ ਸਥਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਨਾਮ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਮਤਿਹਾਨ ਜੇ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਆਯੋਜਿਤ ਕਰੇ ਤਾਂ ਟਰੱਸਟ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਾਲੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

4. ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਦਿੱਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ

ਵਿਭਿੰਨ ਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਕ੍ਰਮਵਾਰ ਵਕਤਾ ਤੇ ਲੇਖਕ ਕਾਰਜਸ਼ਾਲਾ ਲਗਾ ਕੇ ਨੌਜੁਆਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਖਲਾਈ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਵਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਟਰੱਸਟ ਮਾਲੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

5. ਭਗਤ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ

ਇਸ ਟਰੱਸਟ ਦੇ ਮਾਲੀ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਨਾਲ ਕੋਈ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਕਾਲਜਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਕੂਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਰ-ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਣ ਕਰਵਾਏ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

6. ਸ. ਨਰੈਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਯਾਦਗਾਰੀ ਟਰੱਸਟ

ਸਕੂਲ ਦੇ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਜ਼ੀਫੇ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਕਾਲਜ ਦੇ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਨਾਮ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ।